

From: [Ruesch, Paul](#)
To: [R5 ER Notification List](#)
Cc: [Kondreck, Robert](#); [Peaslee, Corey](#); [Collier, Demaree](#); [Zintak, Leonard](#)
Subject: RE: ER Notification #4 (FINAL), La Salle Chemical Fire Site, La Salle, Illinois (NRC 1357400, 1357481)
Date: Thursday, January 12, 2023 6:25:32 PM

ER Notification #4 (Final): La Salle Chemical Plant Fire Site La Salle, IL, NRC#1357400, 1357481

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report Date: 1/12/2023, 1730 CST

Overview: Multiple explosions and a large fire occurred at a chemical plant operated by Carus LLC in La Salle, La Salle County, Illinois. The plant manufactures water treatment and pollution control chemicals, including permanganates, phosphates, polymers and catalysts. The plant was evacuated and a shelter-in-place order was in effect in the vicinity of the plant during the fire but the order has now been lifted. The fire was completely extinguished at 1230 hrs on 1/12/2023 and the fire chief release the Site back to Carus. The plant is adjacent to the Little Vermillion River, which flows to the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal and the Illinois River. No releases have been detected in surface water, though monitoring continues. The PRP has hired a private cleanup contractor to perform remediation activities both on site and off-site.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions and Roles: Multiple fire departments responded along with MABAS resources to address the fire. The City of La Salle, Illinois EPA, Illinois DNR and USCG MSU Chicago responded to assist with activities including river monitoring.

EPA Actions and Roles: Illinois EPA and La Salle County EMA requested EPA assistance with air monitoring. Two OSCs responded along with START contractors concluded conducting perimeter and neighborhood air monitoring at 1330 hrs. There is a Superfund Site (Matthiessen & Hegeler Zinc Company) immediately adjacent to the chemical plant. The EPA RPM is on site with the OSCs. IMAAC plume models were provided throughout the response and sent to on scene responders. EPA participated in a press conference at 1600 on 1/11/2023 and 1400 on 1/12/2023. A Unified Command consisting of the City of LaSalle, Illinois EPA, US EPA and Carus was established on 1/12/2023. The UC will transition site management to the State of Illinois EPA and US EPA remedial programs on 1/13/2023. A final UC coordination meeting will be held at 0900 on 1/13/2023. A press release is anticipated to be issued by the City of La Salle on 1/13/2023 indicating the end of emergency response operations.

Media Interest: High

Media Links:

<https://www.shawlocal.com/news-tribune/news/2023/01/12/la-salle-residents-remove-chemical-oxidant-from-property-after-carus-fire/> <https://www.shawlocal.com/news-tribune/news/2023/01/12/la-salle-air-water-levels-safe-epa-says-day-after-chemical-fire/>
<https://wgntv.com/news/illinois/clean-up-continues-after-la-salle-carus-power-plant-explosion/>

Note: See <https://response.epa.gov/lasallechemicalfire> for additional information. This is the final ER Notification. EPA will provide further updates through Pollution Reports (PolReps).

Contact: Rob Kondreck, OSC 312-758-6517

The EPA will continue to monitor and provide updates as needed

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

From: Ruesch, Paul

Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2023 9:35 AM

To: R5 ER Notification List <R5_ER_Notification_List@epa.gov>

Cc: Kondreck, Robert <kondreck.robert@epa.gov>; Peaslee, Corey <Peaslee.Corey@epa.gov>; Collier, Demaree <Collier.Demaree@epa.gov>; Zintak, Leonard <zintak.leonard@epa.gov>

Subject: RE: ER Notification #3, La Salle Chemical Fire Site, La Salle, Illinois

ER Notification #3: La Salle Chemical Plant Fire Site La Salle, IL, NRC#1357400

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report Date: 1/12/2023, 0930 CST

Overview: Multiple explosions and a large fire occurred at a chemical plant operated by Carus LLC in LaSalle, La Salle County, Illinois. The plant manufactures water treatment and pollution control chemicals, including permanganates, phosphates, polymers and catalysts. The plant was evacuated and a shelter-in-place order was in effect in the vicinity of the plant during the fire but the order has now been lifted. The fire is expected to be completely extinguished this morning. Fire watch will continued through the night, with no flare ups. The plant is adjacent to the Little Vermillion River, which flows to the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal and the Illinois River. No releases have been detected in surface water at this time and monitoring continues. All firefighting run-off water was contained to an on-site retention pond. The PRP has hired a private cleanup contractor to perform remediation activities.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions and Roles: Multiple fire departments responded along with MABAS resources to address the fire, which has now been extinguished. La Salle City Fire Department is incident command at the site. La Salle County EMA, Illinois EPA and USCG MSU Chicago responded to assist with activities including river monitoring.

EPA Actions and Roles: Illinois EPA and La Salle County EMA requested EPA assistance with air monitoring. Two EPA OSCs responded along with START contractors and are conducting perimeter and neighborhood air monitoring. There is a Superfund Site (Matthiessen & Hegeler Zinc Company) immediately adjacent to the chemical plant. The EPA RPM is in contact with the OSC. An IMAAC plume model

was requested and sent to on scene responders. EPA participated in a press conference at 1600 CST on 1/11/2023 and will participate in a daily press conference scheduled for today, 1/12/2023 at 1400 CST. A Unified Command was established to manage the response consisting of the PRP, City of La Salle, Illinois EPA and US EPA. US EPA and the State IMT are facilitating planning meetings today to issue an IAP to coordinate operations and communications once the fire is out.

Media Interest: High

Media Links:

<https://www.shawlocal.com/news-tribune/news/2023/01/12/la-salle-residents-remove-chemical-oxidant-from-property-after-carus-fire/> <https://www.shawlocal.com/news-tribune/news/2023/01/12/la-salle-air-water-levels-safe-epa-says-day-after-chemical-fire/> <https://wgntv.com/news/illinois/clean-up-continues-after-la-salle-carus-power-plant-explosion/>

Note: This is the final ER Notification. Future updates will be via PolRep at <https://response.epa.gov/lasallechemicalfire>.

Contact: Rob Kondreck, OSC 312-758-6517

The EPA will continue to monitor and provide updates as needed

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

From: Zintak, Leonard <zintak.leonard@epa.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2023 7:12 PM

To: R5 ER Notification List <R5_ER_Notification_List@epa.gov>

Cc: Kondreck, Robert <kondreck.robert@epa.gov>; Peaslee, Corey <Peaslee.Corey@epa.gov>;

Ruesch, Paul <ruesch.paul@epa.gov>; Collier, Demaree <Collier.Demaree@epa.gov>

Subject: ER Notification #2, LaSalle Chemical Fire Site, LaSalle, Illinois

**ER Notification #2: LaSalle Chemical Fire Site
LaSalle, IL, NRC#1357400**

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report Date: 1/11/2023, 1900 CST

Overview: Multiple explosions and a large fire occurred at a chemical plant operated by Carus LLC in LaSalle, LaSalle County, Illinois. The plant manufactures water treatment and pollution control chemicals, including permanganates and possibly phosphates, polymers and catalysts. The plant was evacuated and a shelter-in-place order was in effect in the vicinity of the plant during the fire but the order has now been lifted. The fire is mostly extinguished but may continue smoldering. Fire watch will continue through the night. The plant is adjacent to the Little Vermillion River, which flows to the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal and the Illinois River. No releases

have been detected in surface water at this time. The PRP has hired a private cleanup contractor to perform remediation activities.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions and Roles: Multiple fire departments responded along with MABAS resources to address the fire, which has now been extinguished. LaSalle County EMA is incident command on site. Illinois EPA and USCG MSU Chicago responded to assist with activities including river monitoring.

EPA Actions and Roles: Illinois EPA and LaSalle County EMA requested EPA assistance with air monitoring. An EPA OSC responded along with START contractors and are conducting perimeter and neighborhood air monitoring. There is a Superfund Site (Matthiessen & Hegeler Zinc Company) immediately adjacent to the chemical plant. The EPA RPM is in contact with the OSC. An IMAAC plume model was requested and sent to on scene responders. EPA participated in a press conference at 1600 CST.

Media Interest: High

Media Links:

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/fire-rages-illinois-chemical-plant-residents-ordered-shelter-2023-01-11/>

<https://abc7chicago.com/lasalle-fire-illinois-carus-chemical-plant/12688768/>

Note: See <https://response.epa.gov/lasallechemicalfire> for additional information.

Contact: Rob Kondreck, OSC 312-758-6517

The EPA will continue to monitor and provide updates as needed

UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Len Zintak
On-Scene Coordinator
U.S. EPA Region 5
Chicago, Illinois
(312) 886-4246 office
(312) 353-2318 24-hr Emergency
zintak.leonard@epa.gov